

# ***The Fluency Development Lesson –*** **Effective Foundational Reading** **Instruction**

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Let's Cultivate Literacy...

# Let's Cultivate Literacy...

## With a Song!



# The Garden Song

by David Mallett

*Inch by inch, row by row  
Gonna make this garden grow  
Gonna mulch it deep and low  
Gonna make it fertile ground  
Inch by inch, row by row  
Please bless these seeds I sow  
Please keep them safe below  
'Till the rain comes tumbling down*



# The Garden Song

by David Mallett

Plant your rows  
Straight and long  
Season with a prayer and song  
Mother Earth will make you strong  
If you give her loving care....



# The Garden Song

by David Mallett

Old crow watching from a tree  
He's got his hungry eyes on me  
In my garden I'm as free  
As that feathered thief up there.



# The Garden Song

by David Mallett

*Inch by inch, row by row  
Gonna make this garden grow  
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# The Anti-Garden Song

**Slug by slug, weed by weed  
Boy this garden's got me teed  
All the insects come to feed  
On my tomato plants  
Sunburnt face, skinned up knees  
The kitchen's choked with zucchinis  
I'm shopping at the A&P's  
Next time I get the chance**





# Why Sing



# Why Sing?



# It's Reading!



# I'll Take Manhattan!

We'll have Manhattan, the Bronx and Staten Island too. It's lovely going through the zoo. It's very fancy on old Delancey Street, you know. The subway charms us so when balmy breezes blow to and fro.



**From:** Rebecca I

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 12, 2011 11:04 PM

**To:** RASINSKI, TIMOTHY

**Subject:** Singing and Fluency

\

Hi Dr. Rasinski,

Over the summer and again in October you spoke at Teachers College about the power of singing

*I challenged myself in October to begin singing with my students and they have been singing ever since. I've thanked you once and have to thank you AGAIN. I have never seen so much progress in reading. Everyone of my first graders is reading on grade level (or higher) and they love to sing.*

You have changed the way I teach. My students enter my classroom most mornings with their current song playing. They hum or sing throughout the day.

I am so proud of these joyful learners.

Thank you again,

Becky Iwasaki

South Street School

Danbury, CT



# LET'S BRING BACK THE MAGIC OF SONG FOR TEACHING READING

Becky Iwasaki ■ Timothy Rasinski ■ Kasim Yildirim ■ Belinda S. Zimmerman

In most primary classrooms in the United States, reading instruction is increasingly dominated by literature (chiefly stories) and informational texts. Recent calls for reading curriculum reform continue to note the primacy of literature and informational texts (Dorfman & Capelli, 2007; Flowers & Flowers, 2009; Spencer, 2011).

Yet a considerable amount of language activity we engage in as adults involves rhythmical words such as songs. Perhaps it is singing in places of worship, or the beginning of a sporting event, or singing along to the radio while driving, or just listening to one's ipod while walking in the neighborhood. If during these singing episodes we were provided with the written lyrics to the songs, we would be reading!

We think that singing (while simultaneously having a visual display of the words in the songs) could be a very useful instructional tool to teach

reading to beginning readers. A growing body of research and scholarly thought suggests that singing has potential for improving reading (Biggs, Homan, Dedrick, & Rasinski, 2008; Fisher, 2001; Harp, 1988; Hines, 2010; Miller & Coen, 1994; Smith, 2000). For example, Biggs and colleagues (2008) found that the regular repeated singing and reading of songs by struggling middle school readers over a nine-week

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**Belinda S. Zimmerman** is an assistant professor of reading education at Kent State University, Ohio, USA; email [bz4literacy@yahoo.com](mailto:bz4literacy@yahoo.com).

dear daddy,

I love you so much daddy because you  
play ball with me and you come to  
the park with me. You are my  
sunshine my only sunshine you make  
me happy when skies are gray you'll  
never know dear how much I love  
you please don't go away. I love  
just the way you are.

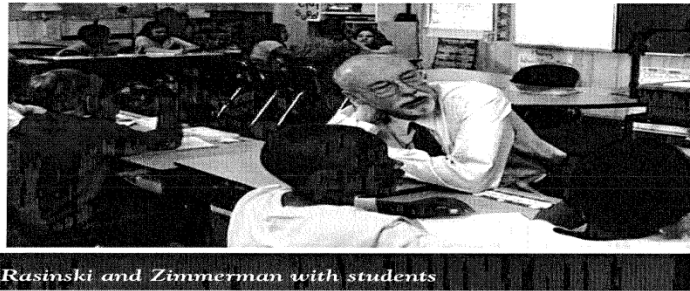


# We Need More Poetry Too!

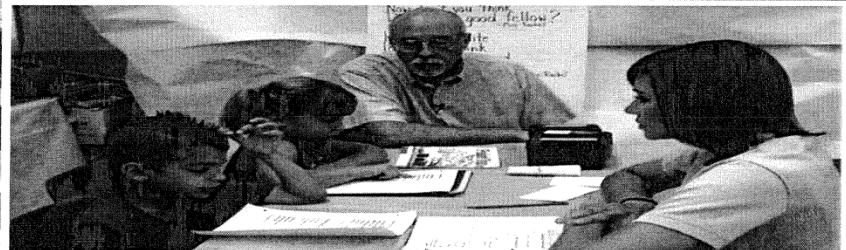
**T**EACHING LITERACY

## What's The Perfect Text for Struggling Readers? Try Poetry!

by Timothy Rasinski and Belinda Zimmerman



*Rasinski and Zimmerman with students*



**B**elinda Zimmerman was walking down the school hallway when second grader Zach popped out of his classroom. He went directly up to her and asked, “Mrs. Z, want to hear me read my new poem that Mr. Rasinski wrote?”

“Absolutely,” replied Belinda with a broad smile. She walked Zach to a quiet area in the hall and asked Zach to perform. After a brief cough to clear his throat, Zach held out the paper containing his poem and in his best expressive voice read:

There's a long sunny season called summer.  
When it's over kids say, “What a bummer!”  
It's soon time for school  
Which can be awfully cool  
If you don't want to get any dummer!

Belinda chuckled, put her arm around Zach, and told him how well she thought he read his poem. She asked if she could see the written poem and smiled when she saw the last word. She asked Zach if that word was spelled correctly. Blushing just a little, he indicated that it wasn't spelled correctly, but that the poet wanted that last word to rhyme with summer and bummer. Belinda then walked Zach to an adjoining waiting room and asked him to perform the poem again for some parents who were waiting for their children. Again, Zach's reading was greeted with smiles,

followed by supported practice with feedback, Zach and his classmates were eventually able to read the poem with good expression and confidence.

Each day in our reading clinic, students master one or two poems and perform them for classmates, teachers, and other adults. We have come to view the practice and performance of poetry as key to our students' growth in reading.

All of the students who come to our summer program, which we call Camp Read-a-Lot, exhibit reading difficulties, primarily in comprehension. However, a closer examination of most students' reading indicates that difficulties in word recognition and fluency (Foundational Reading Skills according to the Common Core State Standards) are a primary cause of their comprehension problems.

### Why Poetry?

Although poetry has been a mainstay in elementary classrooms for decades, it appears to be on the decline (Gill, 2007) in favor of informational texts and stories. We feel that poetry (and other rhythmical texts) offers unique advantages for students who struggle in mastering the foundational reading skills:

- *Poems for children are relatively short in length.* This

# A “Bridge” Model of Reading Instruction

**Word Study**

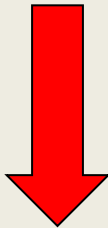
**Word Decoding, Vocabulary and Spelling**



**Fluency Instruction**

**Automaticity in Word Recognition**

**Prosody (Expressiveness in Reading)**



**Comprehension (Guided Reading)**

**Authentic Reading**

**Comprehension Strategies**

**Foundational Reading  
Competencies**



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# Some Facts About Word Knowledge

Students' growth in vocabulary has been stagnant, at best, over the past 20 years.



# 2013 NAEP Results

HUFF  
POST EDUCATION



Joy Resmovits

Joy.resmovits@huffingtonpost.com

## Vocabulary Test Results Show Top U.S. Students Losing Ground, Others Stagnate

Posted: 12/06/2012 11:00 am EST | Updated: 12/06/2012 3:00 pm EST

If you can identify the meaning of the word "prospered" within a passage, chances are you know more vocabulary than most American high school seniors.

The results of the national standardized vocabulary tests are in, and the scores are troubling -- but not unexpected -- experts say. Average performance on the U.S. Education Department's national exams was mostly stagnant at low levels between 2009 and 2011, and the highest performers lost ground during that time.

"We should be worried about this," said Cornelia Orr, executive director of the National Assessment Governing Board. "It's not any more of a crisis than we've been seeing in reading."

On Thursday, the National Center for Education Statistics, the U.S. Education Department's research arm, released the vocabulary scores for fourth- and eighth-grade students on the 2009 and 2011 reading comprehension exams administered by the National Assessment of Educational Progress. This is the first time the results of a separate scale for vocabulary questions on the national reading comprehension test have been released. NAEP is considered the "gold standard" of standardized testing, since stakes are low for children and since the tests are designed by the federal government, which has no skin in the game in terms of how states perform. (The release also included 12th grade scores for only 2009, since that exam is only given every four years).

On average, fourth graders scored 218 out of a total of 500 points, and eighth graders scored 265. The top performing fourth graders

So what's the **BEST** way to teach vocabulary?



(2)

Antonyms  
sent

Part of Speech & Definition  
Due Next Fri

Mike Rasinski  
Read per 1  
March 1

### VOCABULARY LIST

- Do First
- ✓ 1. ~~adroit~~ - adj. skillful & clever
  - ✓ 2. ~~advise~~ - v. to notify
  - ✓ 3. ~~aromatic~~ - adj. having an aroma
  - ✓ 4. ~~ascetic~~ - adj. self denying, austere  
n. one who leads a life of self-denial
  - ✓ 5. ~~bayou~~ - n. in southern U.S. A marshy inlet or outlet of lake, river, etc.
  - ✓ 6. ~~bellicose~~ - adj. quarrelsome, warlike
  - ✓ 7. ~~choleric~~ - adj. easily angered
  - ✓ 8. ~~cloister~~ - n. a monastery or convent
  - ✓ 9. ~~conjecture~~ - n. guess, inferring without complete evidence
  - ✓ 10. ~~copious~~ - adj. copious, abundant
  - ✓ 11. ~~coquetry~~ - n. a girl or woman flirt
  - ✓ 12. ~~cornice~~ - n. a horizontal molding projecting along the top of a wall, etc.
  - ✓ 13. ~~courageous~~ - n. brave
  - ✓ 14. ~~debris~~ - n. bits & pieces of stone, rubbish, etc.
  - ✓ 15. ~~decorum~~ - n. whatever is suitable or proper
  - ✓ 16. ~~diadem~~ - n. - crown, ornamental headband
  - ✓ 17. ~~docile~~ - adj. easy to discipline
  - ✓ 18. ~~dogmatic~~ - adj. asserted w/o proof, positive or arrogant in stating opinion
  - ✓ 19. ~~doleful~~ - adj. sad, mournful
  - ✓ 20. ~~efface~~ - v. keep from being noticed, blot out
  - 21. ~~garrulous~~ - adj. talking too much about inconsequential things
  - 22. ~~grapple~~ - n. hand to hand struggle, a grip
  - 23. ~~guidon~~ -
  - 24. ~~impose~~ - v. to place a burden on to force onto others
  - 25. ~~interpose~~ - v. to intervene, interrupt
  - 26. ~~knell~~ - v. to ring slowly, ominously - omen of death
  - 27. ~~languor~~ - n. lack of vigor, weakness
  - 28. ~~ludicrous~~ - adj. causing laughter because absurd or ridiculous
  - 29. ~~malevolence~~ -
  - 30. ~~maudlin~~ - adj. foolishly, often tearfully sentimental
  - 31. ~~melee~~ - n. confused general hand to hand fight
  - 32. ~~molten~~ - adj. melted by heat
  - 33. ~~myriad~~ - n. adj. very many persons or things
  - 34. ~~orb~~ - n. globe or sphere
  - 35. ~~ostracism~~ - n. practicing banishing one
  - 36. ~~pantaloon~~ - n. trousers
  - 37. ~~pariah~~ - n. any outcast person formerly in India any oppressed class
  - 38. ~~pathos~~ - n. quality of something arousing pity
  - 39. ~~perilous~~ - adj. dangerous, involving peril
  - 40. ~~plaintive~~ - adj. expressing sorrow
  - 41. ~~restive~~ - adj. restless, uneasy hard to manage, refusing to go ahead
  - 42. ~~reverie~~ - n. dreamy thinking of pleasant things
  - 43. ~~roseate~~ - adj. roseate color, cheerful optimistic
  - 44. ~~rueful~~ - adj. sorrowful unhappy causing sorrow
  - 45. ~~sallow~~ - adj. having a sickly yellow complexion
  - 46. ~~sardonic~~ - adj. bitterly sarcastic, scornful or mocking
  - 47. ~~savant~~ - n. a learned person
  - 48. ~~sententious~~ - adj. saying much in few words
  - 49. ~~sexton~~ - n. person who takes care of a church, rings bells, arranges burials
  - 50. ~~sinuous~~ - adj. having many curves or turns. ② indirect, untrustworthy
  - 51. ~~suffuse~~ - v. overspread (with liquid, dye, etc.)
  - 52. ~~surmount~~ - adj. rise above ② overcome
  - 53. ~~surplice~~ - n. broad sleeved white gown worn by members of clergy or choir
  - 54. ~~sylvan~~ - adj. characteristic of woods, wooded
  - 55. ~~tableau~~ - n. presentation of a scene by costumed person or group
  - 56. ~~tedious~~ - adj. tiresome boring hackneyed
  - 57. ~~travail~~ - n. hard work or severe pain
  - 58. ~~undulate~~ - v. to cause to move by waves
  - 59. ~~vanquish~~ - v. to defeat
  - 60. ~~venerable~~ - adj. worthy of respect because of one's dignity etc.



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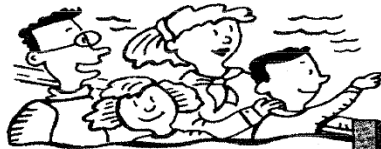
Presents



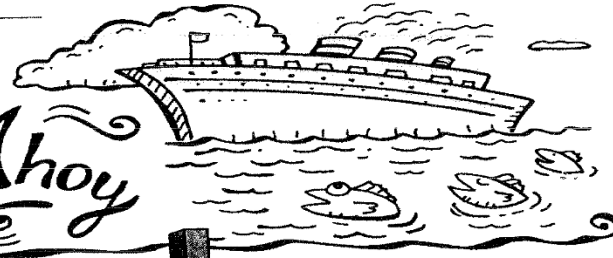


Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read the clues, then write the words.  
Start at the bottom and climb to the top.



Ship Ahoy



A group of ships.  
**Change one letter.**

A piece of paper.  
**Change one letter.**

What you do at night.  
**Change one letter.**

When you walk, you  
first take a \_\_\_\_\_.  
**Change one letter.**

A store.  
**Change one letter.**

Partly frozen rain.  
**Change one letter.**

Animals that give  
us wool.  
**Change one letter.**

A sharp slope uphill.  
I'm tired because that  
hill was \_\_\_\_\_.  
**Add one letter.**

Opposite of *go*.  
**Change one letter.**

s h i p

RASINSKI

Daily Word Ladders Grades 2-3 Scholastic Teaching Resources



# A “Bridge” Model of Reading Instruction

**Word Study**

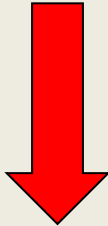
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# A Word Reading Test

dog



remember



# Thanksgiving





Happy New Year!



How did you recognize those words so quickly and effortlessly?

A BIG PROBLEM....

**AUTOMATICITY IN WORD  
RECOGNITION IS NOT READING FAST.**



- Automaticity is measured by reading speed.
- We don't make students automatic readers by telling them to read fast.
- We want students to become fast readers the way we all became reasonably fast readers.

# Prosody

**DUDE!**

**The old man the boat.**



**The old man / the boat.**

**The old / man the boat.**

# WHAT WE KNOW

- **Defining Reading Fluency**
- **Assessing Reading Fluency**
- **To What Extent is Reading Fluency Associated with Proficient Reading?**

# **Profiles of Students Who Perform Poorly on State Silent Reading Comprehension Tests:**

## **The Importance of Developing Proficiency in the Foundational Reading Competencies**

» Valencia and Buly (2010)

**41% Exhibit Difficulty in Word Recognition**

**67% Exhibit Difficulty in Fluency**

**82% Exhibit Difficulty in one or the other.**

**26% Exhibit Difficulty in Both**

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# **Is Fluency an Issue Only for the Primary Grades?**

## **Fluency – Comprehension**

### **Correlations between Oral Fluency and Silent Reading Comprehension**

**Grade 3: .63**

**Grade 5: .66**

**Grade 7: .57**

**Grade 9: .64**

# WHAT WE KNOW

- **Defining Reading Fluency**
- **Assessing Reading Fluency**
- **To What Extent is Reading Fluency Associated with Proficient Reading?**
- **Is Fluency an Issue Only for the Primary Grades?**
- **Teaching Reading Fluency**



# Teaching Reading Fluency

**Teaching Fluency Requires Time: 15-20 min per day.**

# Teaching Reading Fluency

## Instructional Tools:

**Model Fluent Reading**

**Assisted Reading (e.g. Topping)**

**Wide Reading Practice (e.g. Allington)**

**Deep Reading Practice (e.g. Samuels)**

**Focus on Phrasing (e.g. Rasinski)**

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# Forms of Assisted Reading

- Choral Reading

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- Choral Reading
- Paired Reading (NIM)

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- Captioned Television

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- Technology- Assisted Reading

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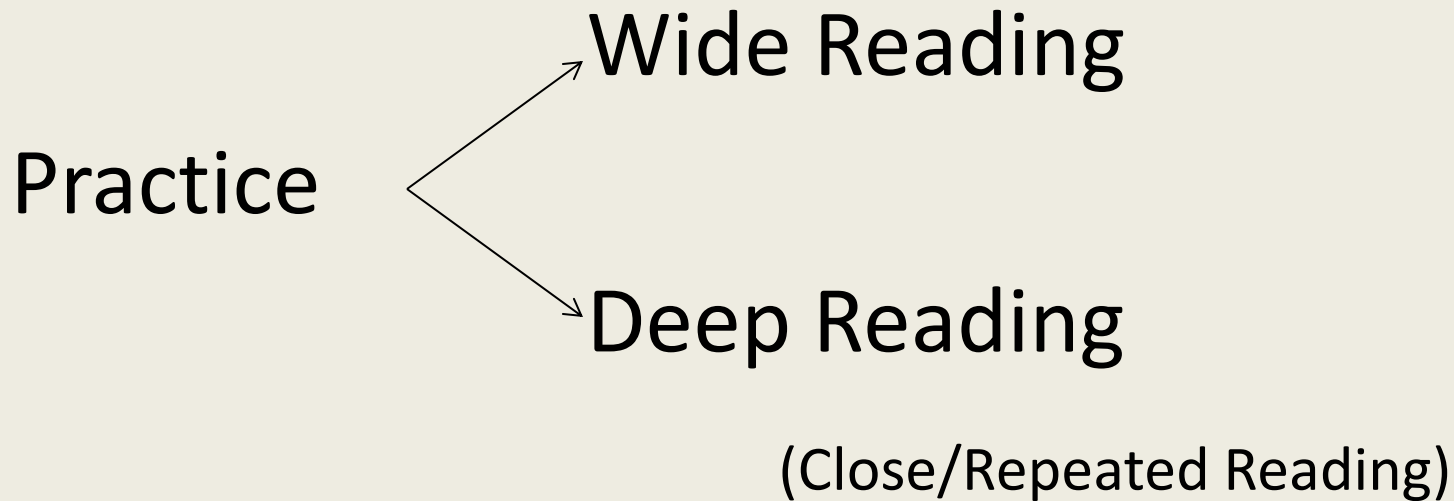
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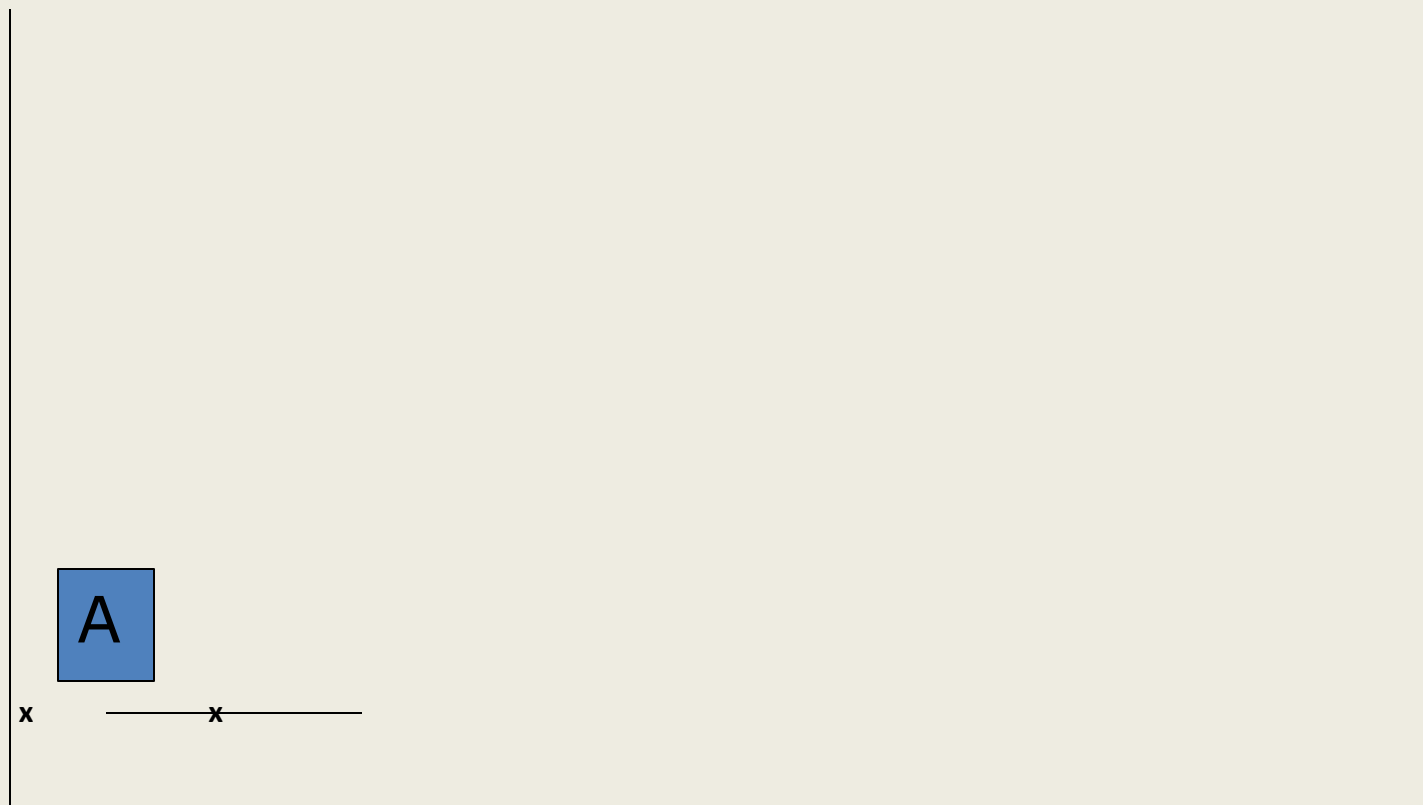
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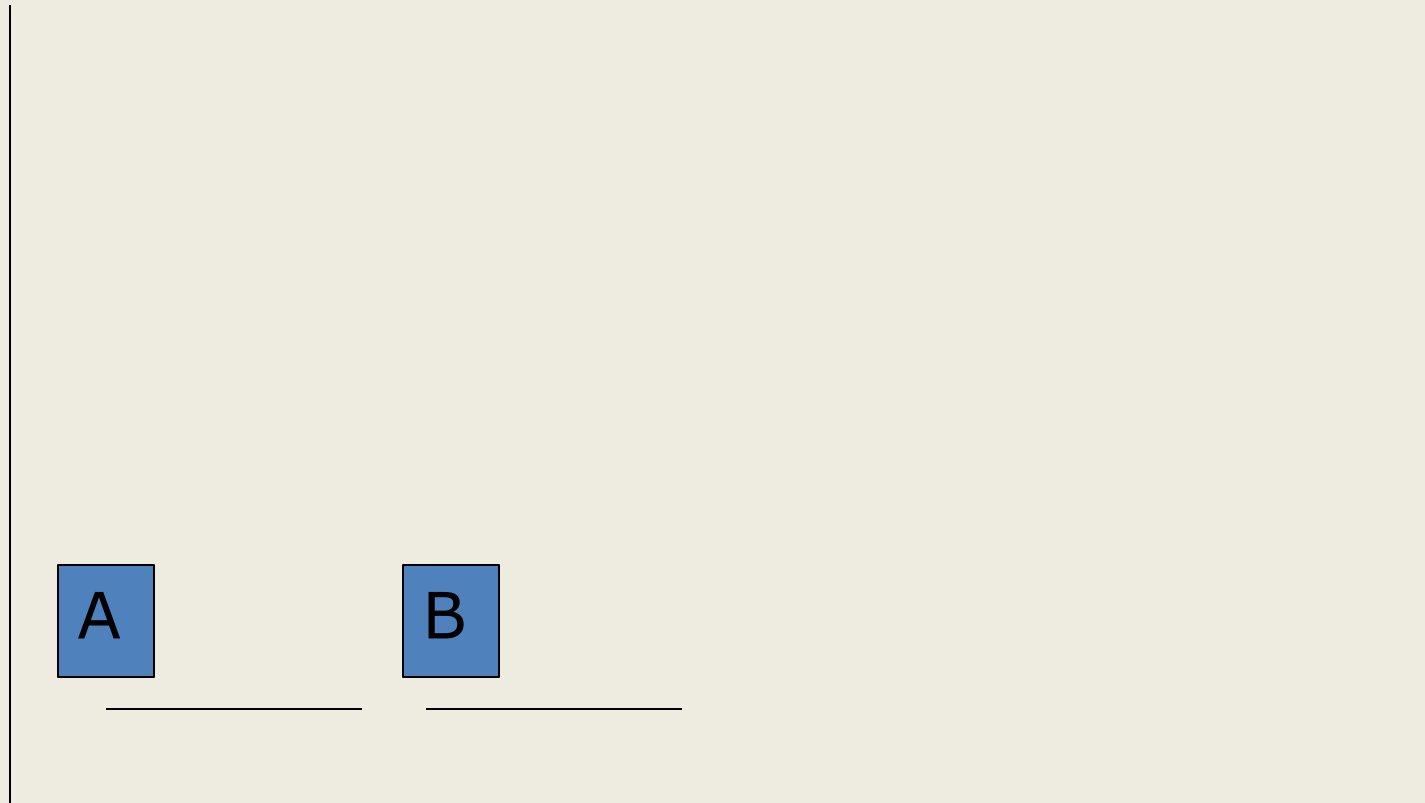


# Wide Reading

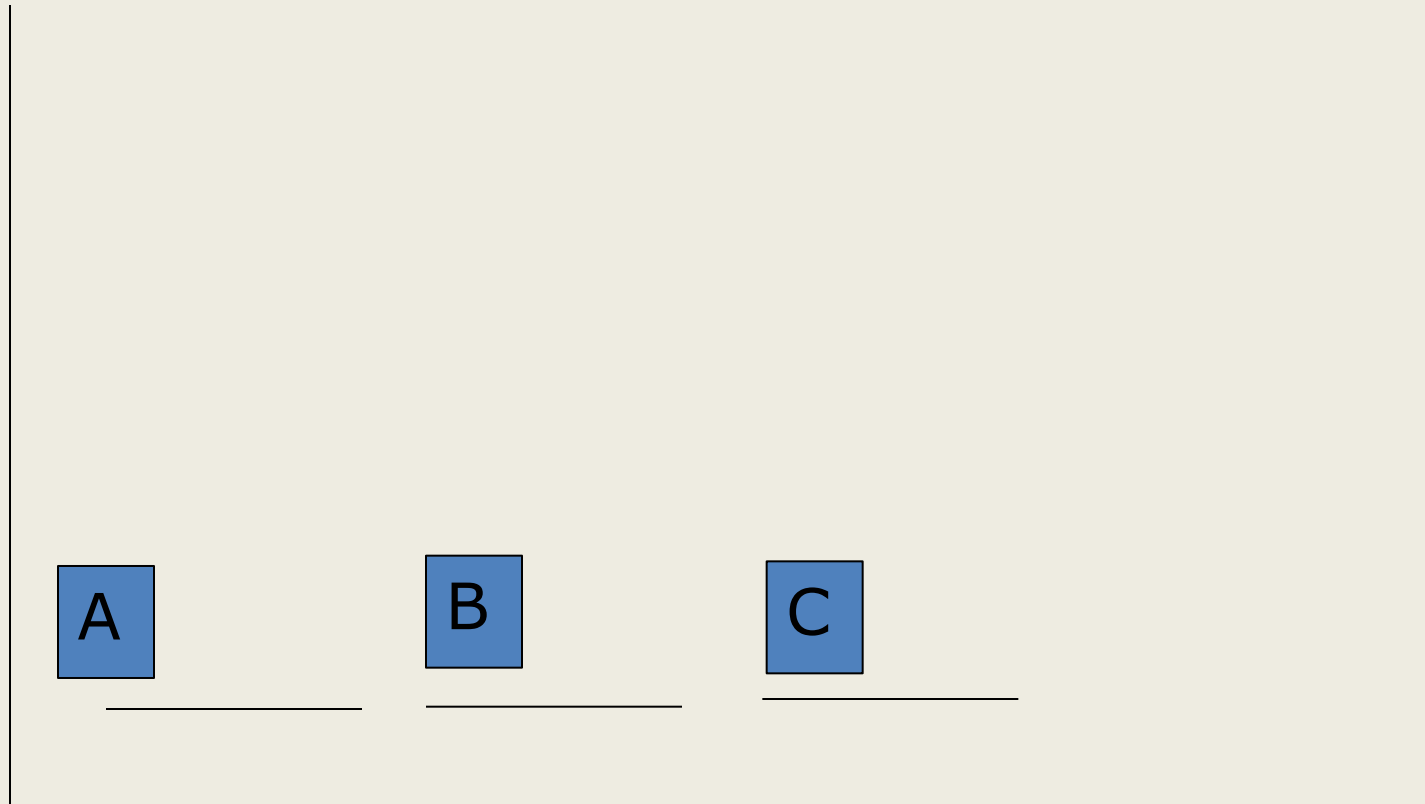


# Wide Reading

(A summary of the research)

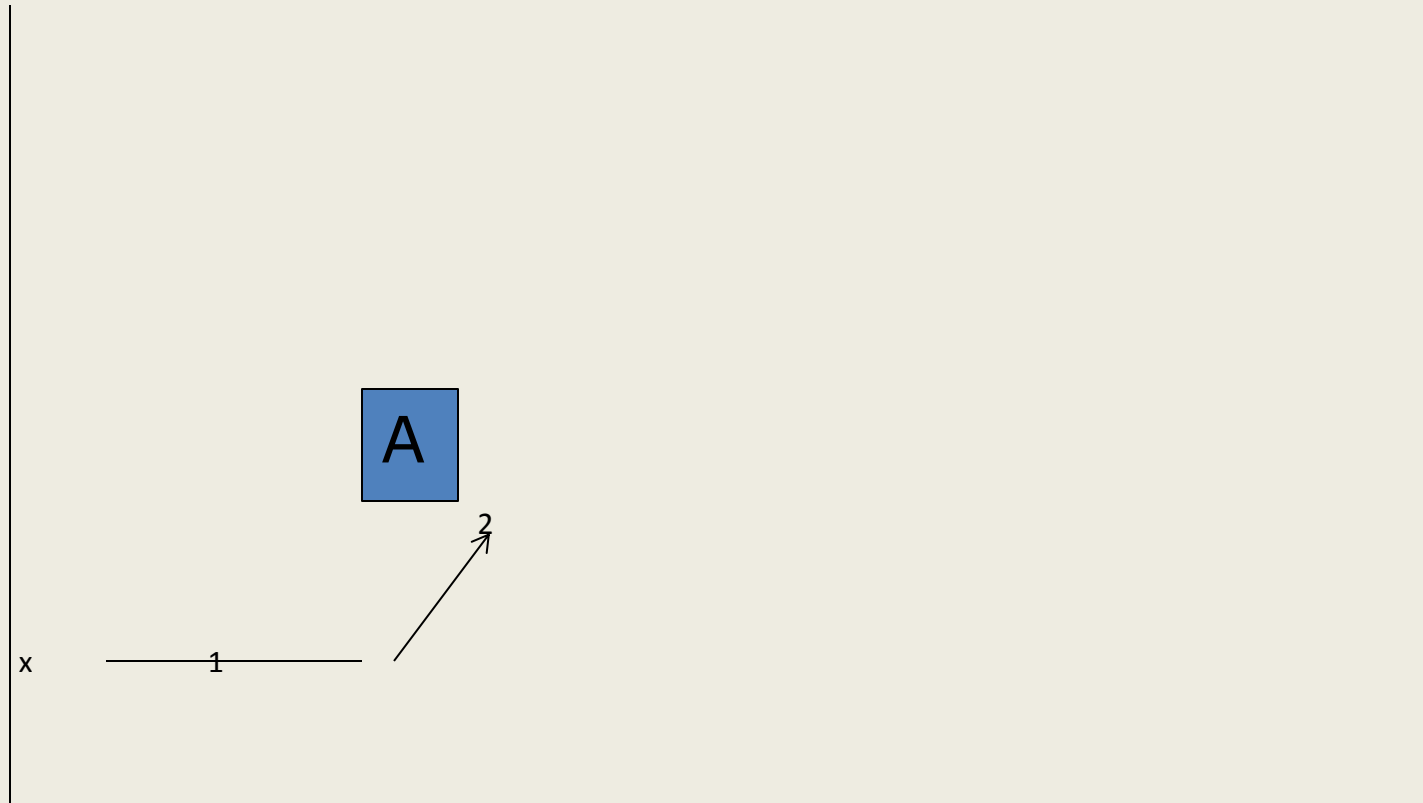


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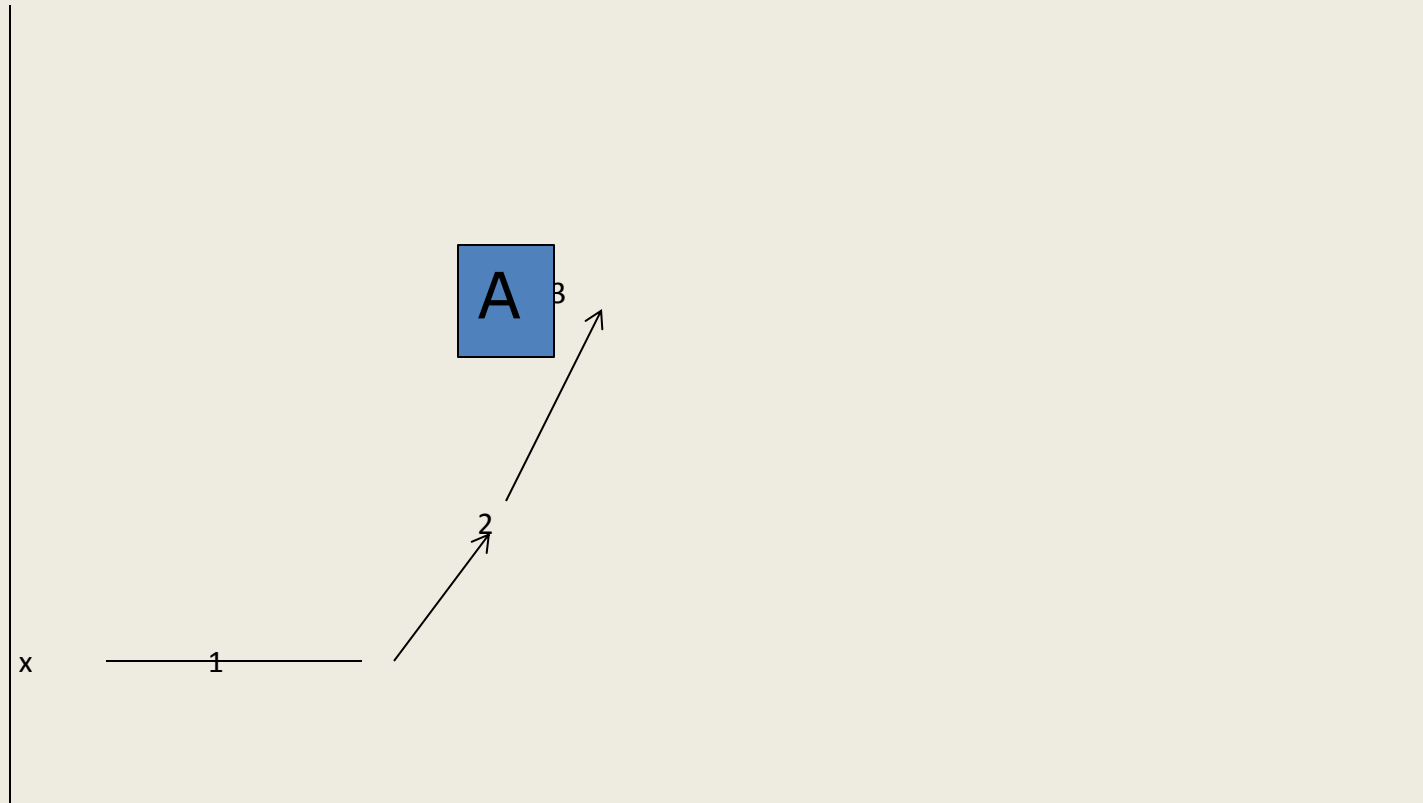
# Deep (Repeated) Reading

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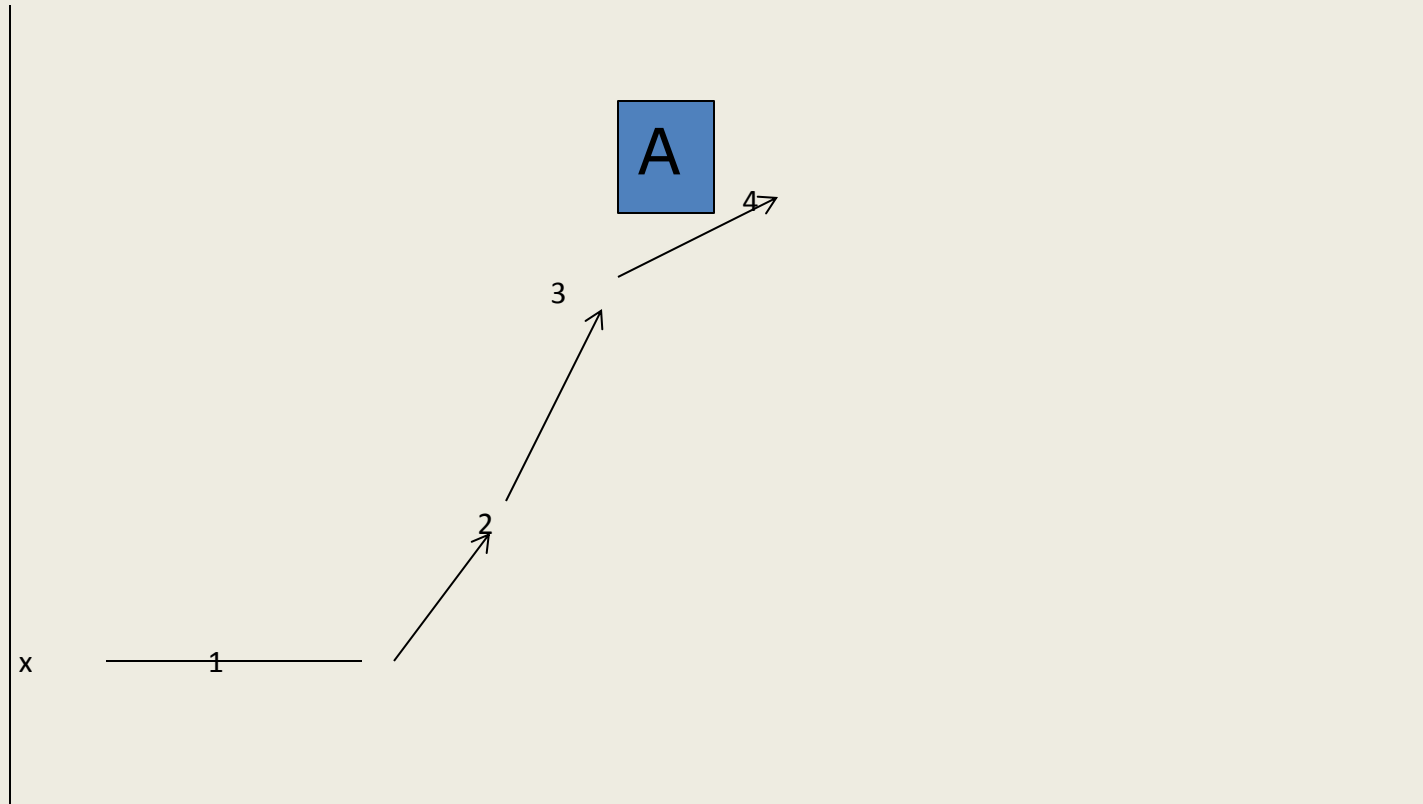
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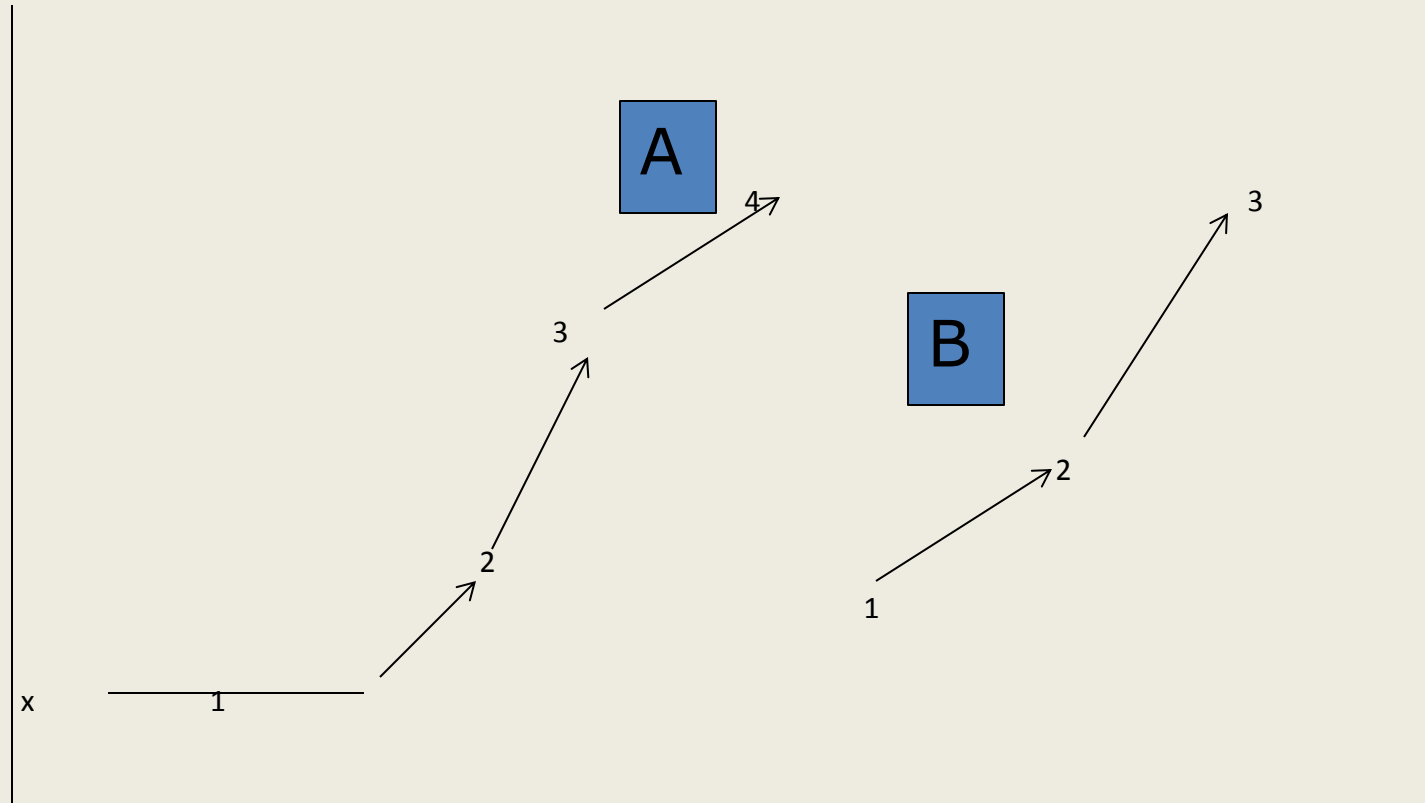
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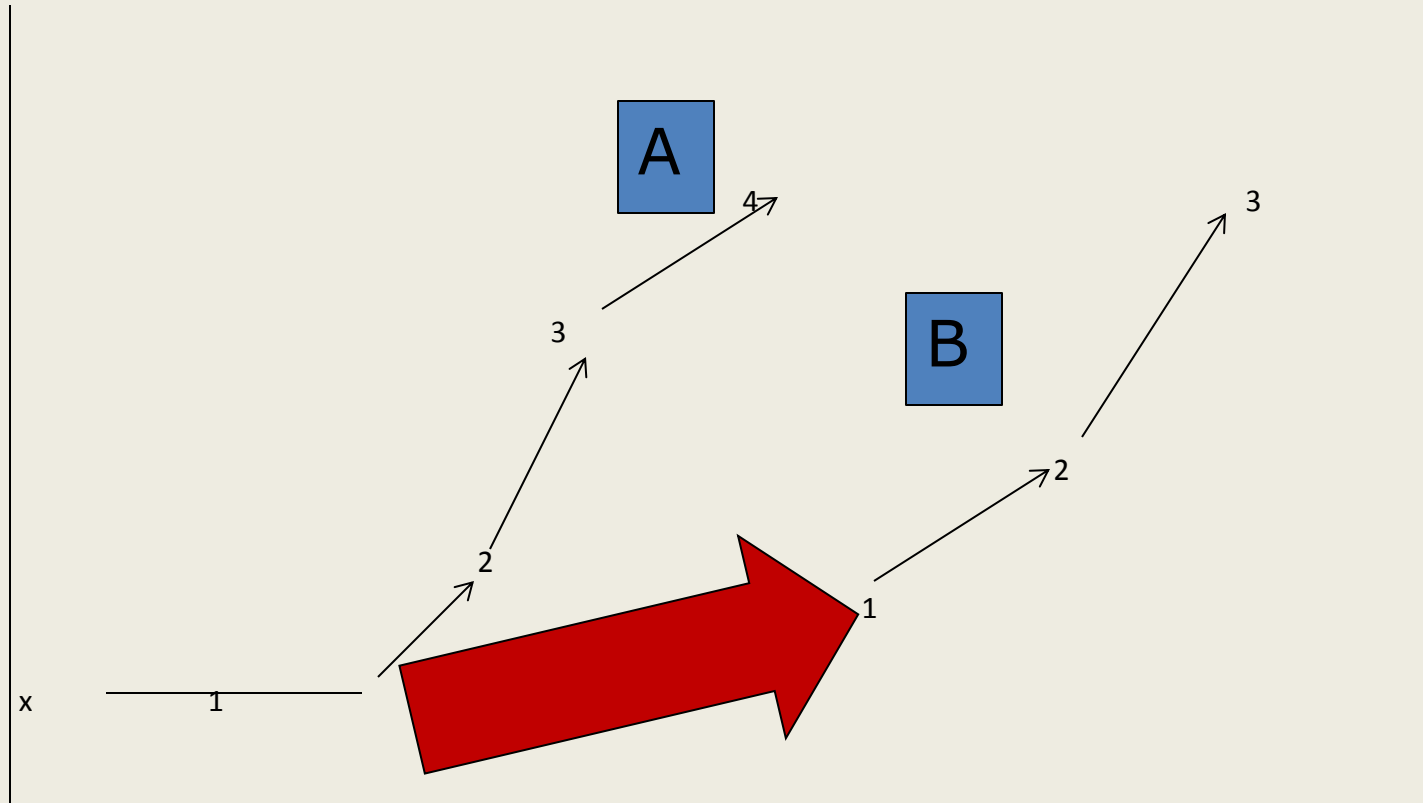
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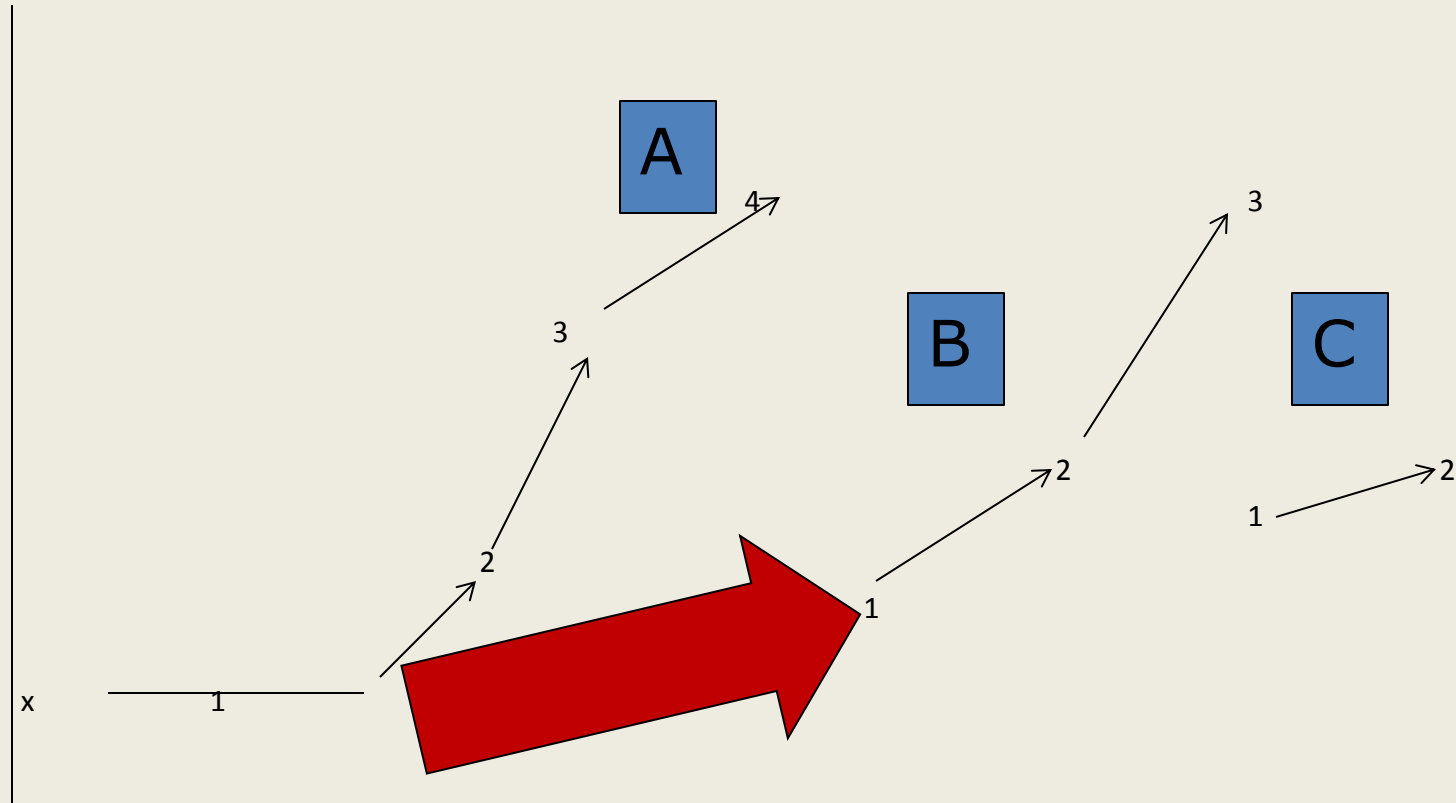
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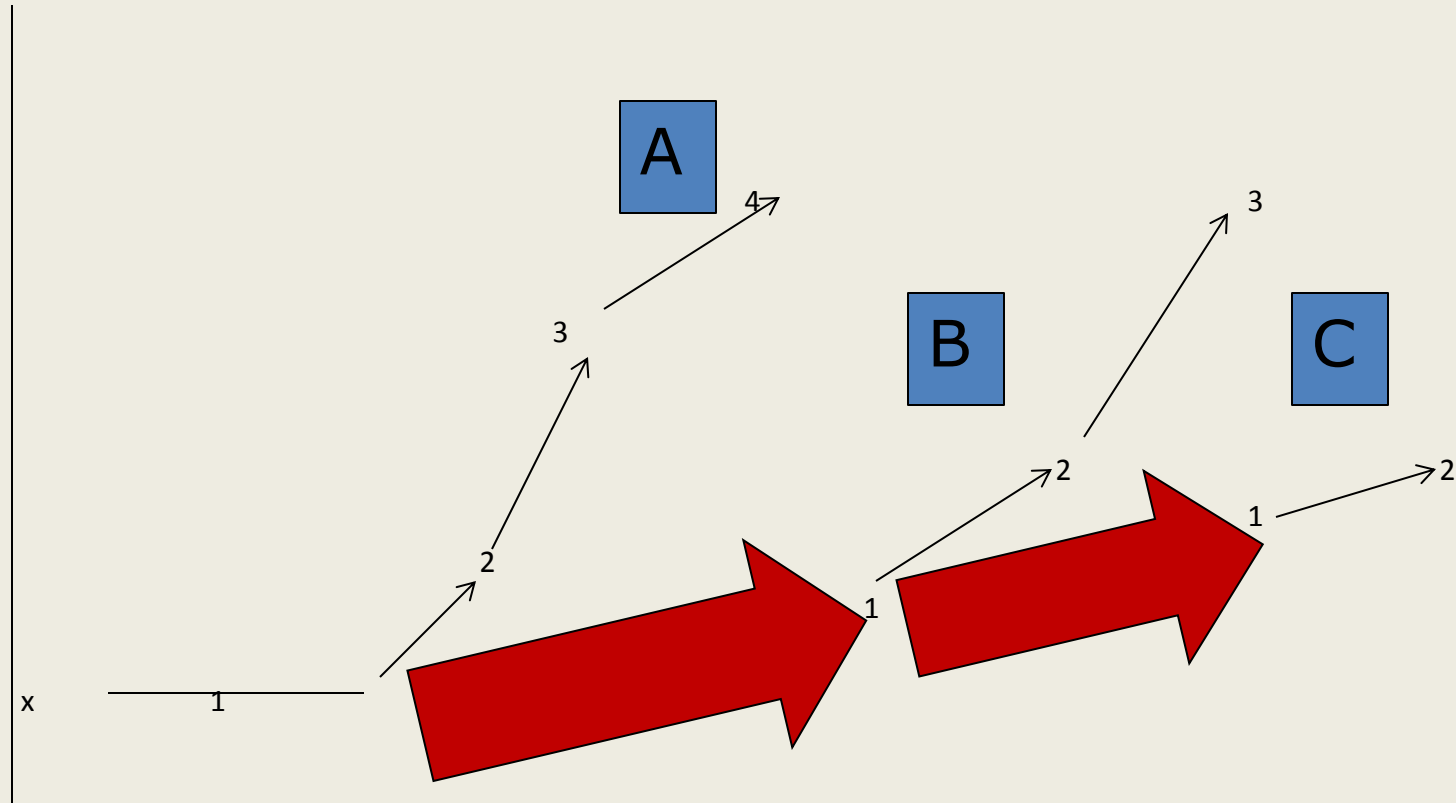
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# Deep (Repeated) Reading

(A summary of the research)



What would motivate a reader to  
read a text closely, deeply,  
or repeatedly?

What would motivate a reader to read a text closely, deeply, or repeatedly?

*Performance!*



OPEN  
MIC  
NIGHT



OPEN  
MIC  
NIGHT

# Texts that are Meant to be Performed

## ◆ Poetry

- ◆ Readers Theater Scripts
- ◆ Song Lyrics
- ◆ Dialogues
- ◆ Monologues
- ◆ Speeches

# Teaching Reading Fluency

## Instructional Tools:

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**Focus on Phrasing (e.g. Rasinski)**

# High Frequency Word Phrases

- The people
- Write it down
- By the water
- Near the car
- My mom and dad
- Over there
- In the woods

See [www.timrasinski.com](http://www.timrasinski.com) for phrases covering the first 600 of Fry's Instant Word List.



# Teaching Reading Fluency

## Instructional Tools for Fluency:

- Model Fluent Reading
- Assisted Reading (e.g. Topping)
- Wide Reading Practice (e.g. Allington)
- Deep Reading Practice (e.g. Samuels)
- Focus on Phrasing (e.g. Rasinski)

**Use these tools to develop synergistic instructional routines:**

***e.g. Fluency Development Lesson***

# ***The Fluency Development Lesson***

The purpose of the FDL is to get students to the point where they can read a new text well (fluently and with understanding) every day.

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Requires 15-20 minutes per day.

# ***The Fluency Development Lesson***

- 1. Students chorally and individually read a poem from the yesterday**

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- 2-3. Teacher intros, reads, and talks with students about today's poem (2-3X)**

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- 4. Students and Teacher chorally read poem (2-3X)**

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- 5. Students practice poem with a partner (2-3X each)**

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- 9. More practice of poem at home (Minimum 5 reads).**

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- 7-8. Select, examine and play with words from poem**
- 9. More practice of poem at home (Min 5 reads).**
- 10. REPEAT DAILY!**

**Let's Give the FDL a Try...**

# Teaching Reading Fluency

## *Fluency Development Lesson: 4 weeks*

Mean Student Performance in Word Recognition Accuracy  
(percentage of words read correctly) on Grade Level Passages

Grade Level	Pretest	Posttest	Gain
1	77 %	92	+ 15
2	95	97	+ 2
3	87	93	+ 6
4	92	97	+ 4

# Teaching Reading Fluency

## *Fluency Development Lesson: 4 weeks*

Mean Student Performance in Reading Fluency - Automaticity  
(Words Correct Per Minute) on Grade Level Passages

Grade Level	Pretest	Posttttest	Gain
1	35 wcpm	49	+ 14
2	61	73	+ 12
3	69	82	+ 13
4	77	108	+ 31

# RESULTS

Lorraine Griffith: 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher West Buncombe County Elementary.

Poetry Repeated Reading:

**2+** years average growth of struggling readers

**59** words correct per minute gain (25 wcpm is the normal gain for grade 4)

Griffith, L. W., & Rasinski, T. V. (2004). A focus on fluency: How one teacher incorporated fluency with her reading curriculum. *The Reading Teacher*, 58, 126- 137.

# RESULTS

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# **Monroe County School Corp Indiana**

# **Monroe County School Corp Indiana**

93% of students in the FDL oriented summer reading program ended up passing the I-Read3 Test.

Rhonda P

6th grade teacher

South Carolina

Using poetry performance as the fluency intervention in her classroom

**Student Profile in Reading**  
**Beginning of the Year**

**End of Year**

- 
- **Below Basic: 67%**
- **Basic: 30%**
- **Proficient: 3%**
- **Advanced: 0%**

Rhonda P

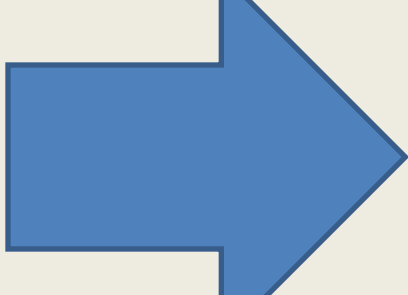
6th grade teacher

South Carolina

Using poetry performance as the fluency intervention in her classroom

**Student Profile in Reading**  
**Beginning of the Year**

**End of Year**



•		
•	<b>Below Basic:</b>	<b>67%</b>
•	<b>Basic:</b>	<b>30%</b>
•	<b>Proficient:</b>	<b>3%</b>
•	<b>Advanced:</b>	<b>0%</b>
		<b>24%</b>
		<b>45%</b>
		<b>25%</b>
		<b>6%</b>

**HeraldTimesOnline.com**

## **Elementary students recite poetry for literacy project**

**After IREAD-3 assessment, MCCSC tries new 'Lesson' plan**

By April Toler  
November 12, 2012

331-4353 | [atoler@heraldt.com](mailto:atoler@heraldt.com)

Standing at the front of his classroom, 8-year-old Covay Cubel was full of confidence as he enthusiastically read aloud the poem “Ah! A Monster’s Lot Is Merry”:

“There is nothing quite so pleasant,

as a solitary trudge,

through the wretched desolation of the pestilential sludge,” the Grandview Elementary student read aloud.

Although Covay had no problem on Thursday standing in front of his third-grade class and reading the poem, that would not have been the case at the beginning of the school year.

But ever since his class began taking part in “The Fluency Development Lesson,” which uses poems and songs to teach reading, Covay’s reading confidence has increased.

So much so that on Thursday, he read the poem aloud not once, but twice.

“I wanted to see if I could read it better,” Covay said.

**The lesson**

# FDL in Action

*“Following the summer camp poetry reading program and second round of tests, 93% of the Monroe County School Corp passed the I-Read 3 Test.”*



- **it gives these children practice in reading connected discourse,.... They had a feeling of success right from the start, and a sense of progress**

SCHOLASTIC

GRADES K-2

# ***FAST START*** for Early Readers

A Research-Based, Send-Home Literacy Program With 60 Reproducible Poems and Activities That Ensures Reading Success for Every

by Nancy Podak, Ed.D. & Timothy Rasinski, Ph.D.

#### Includes:

60 Poems  
& Comprehension  
Activities

50 Fast Start  
Stickers

Reproducible  
Certificates  
& Badges

Parent Letters  
(in English  
& Spanish)

Reading Logs



**Early  
Intervention  
That Works**

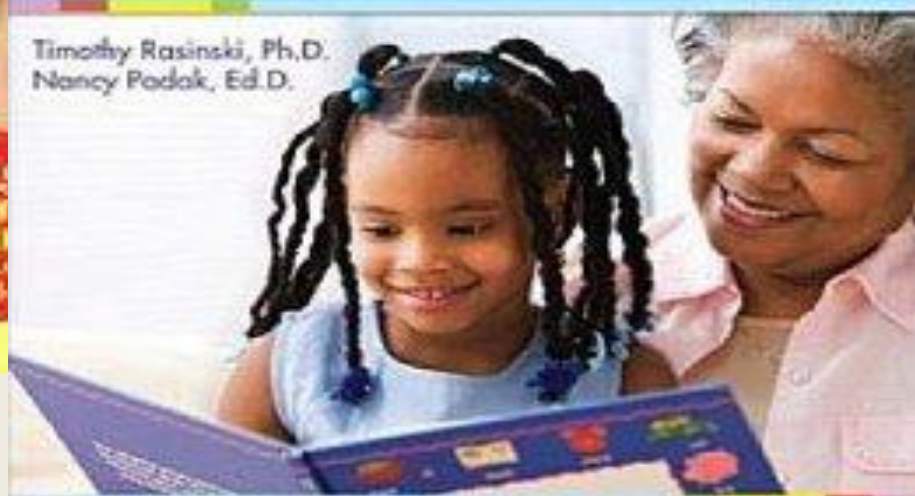
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SCHOLASTIC

# ***Fast Start*** Getting Ready to Read

LOOK  
INSIDE

Timothy Rasinski, Ph.D.  
Nancy Podak, Ed.D.



A Research-Based, Send-Home Literacy Program  
With 104 Reproducible Poems & Activities That  
Ensures Reading Success for Every Child



# **Fast Start: A “Light” Version of the FDL**

## **The *Fast Start* Routine**

**Daily Poem/Rhyme**

**Read to....**

**Read with...**

**Listen to your child read.**

**Word Play**

# Fast Start

★ 8 ★

## Little Bo Peep

**Little Bo Peep  
Has lost her sheep,  
And doesn't know where to find them.  
Leave them alone,  
And they'll come home,  
Wagging their tails behind them.**



# Fast Start – Word Study

## **-eep** Word

Family

Steeple

Deep

Upkeep

Peep

Weep

Sweeper

Sheep

Keep

Deepest

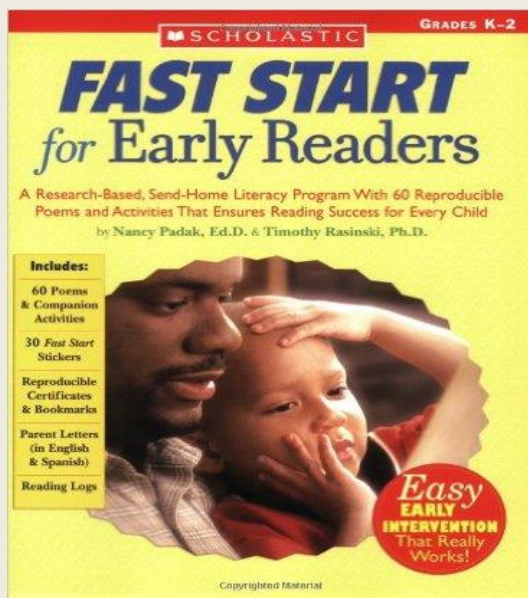
Sleep

Jeep

Sweep

Steep

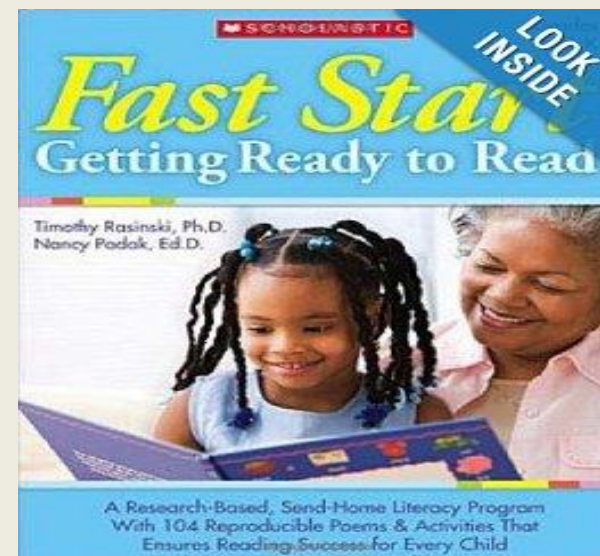
Beep



# Fast Start

## Word Recognition

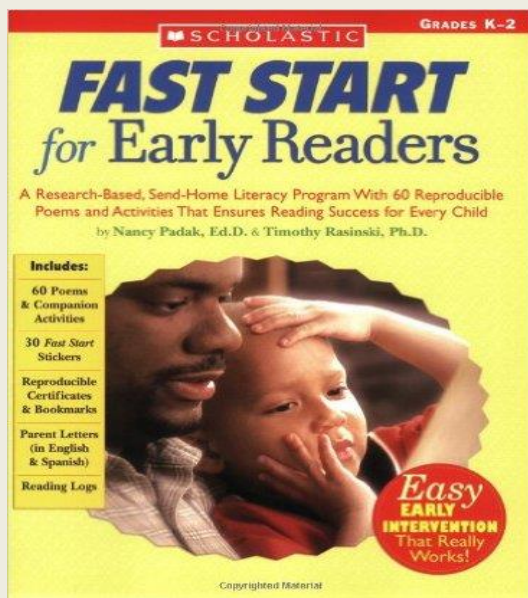
August



November Gain

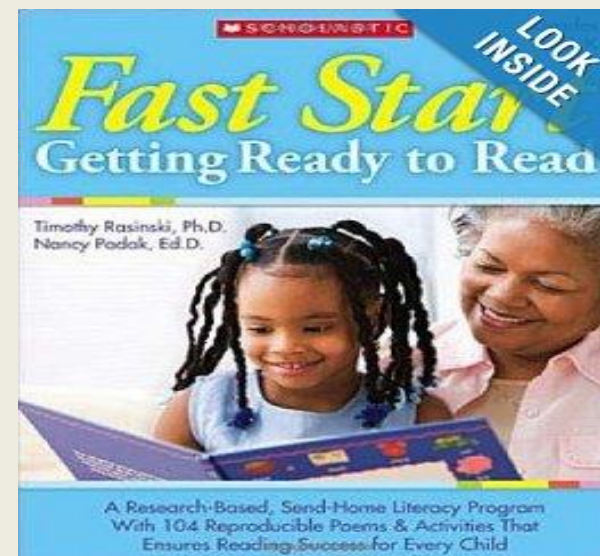
***Fast Start* Group      46**

**Alternative Group      44**



# Fast Start

## Word Recognition



August

November Gain

***Fast Start***

**46**

**101**

**+55**

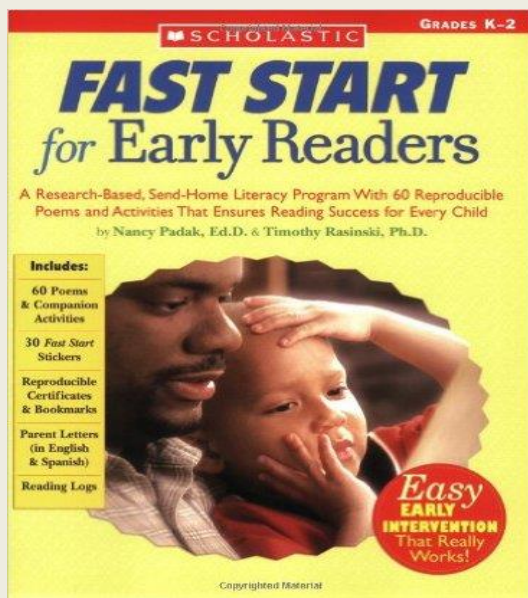
**Alternative**

**44**

**77**

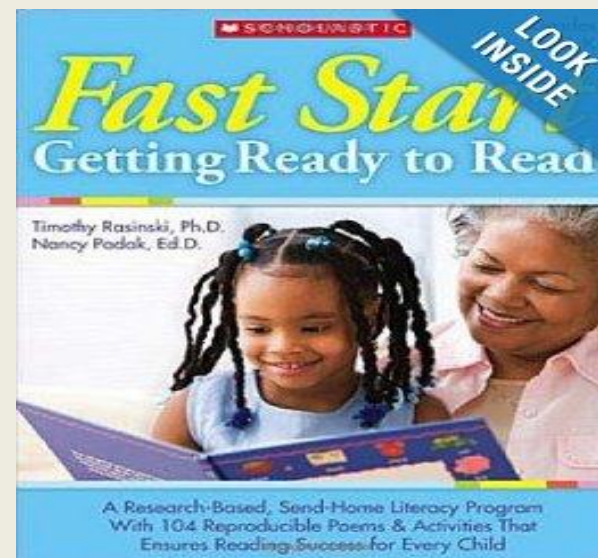
**+33**





**Fast Start**

**Fluency (wcpm)**



**August**

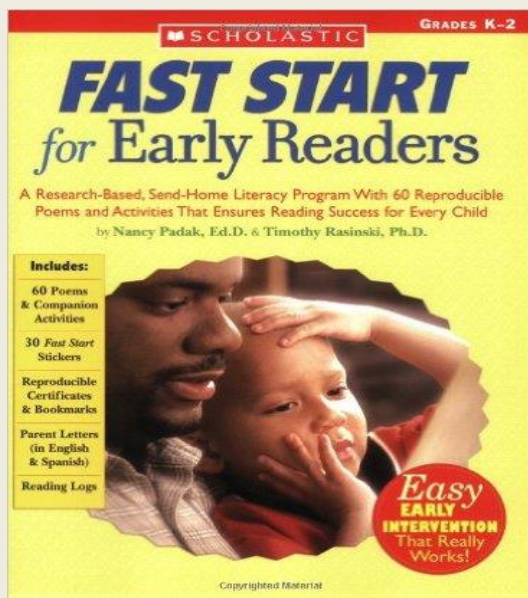
**November Gain**

***Fast Start***

**0.6**

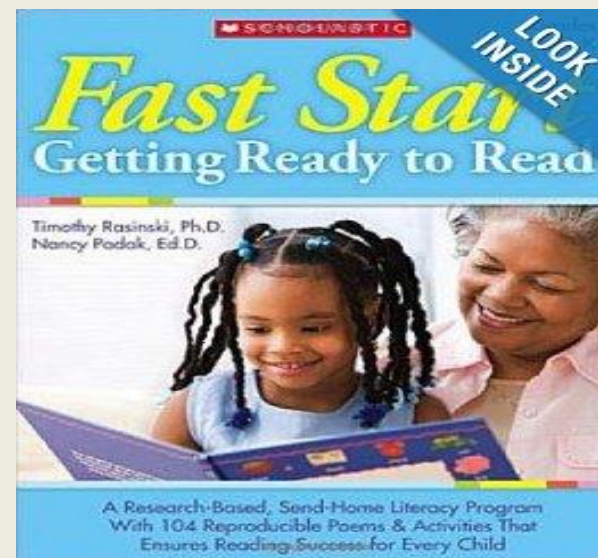
**Alternative**

**1.0**



# Fast Start

## Fluency (wcpm)



August

November Gain

***Fast Start***

**0.6**

**25**

**+24.4**

**Alternative**

**1.0**

**13**

**+12.0**

# Journal of Learning Disabilities®

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Source: 2016 Release of Journal Citation Reports with Source: 2015 Web of Science Data

## The Effects of Reading Fluency Interventions on the Reading Fluency and Reading Comprehension Performance of Elementary Students With Learning Disabilities

### A Synthesis of the Research from 2001 to 2014

Elizabeth A. Stevens, MAEd<sup>1</sup>

Melodee A. Walker, MEd<sup>1</sup>

Sharon Vaughn, PhD<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Texas at Austin, USA

Elizabeth A. Stevens, College of Education SZB 228, University of Texas at Austin, 1912 Speedway D4900, Austin, TX 78712-1284, USA. Email: [elizabeth.stevens@utexas.edu](mailto:elizabeth.stevens@utexas.edu)

### Abstract

Fluent word reading is hypothesized to facilitate reading comprehension by improving automatic word reading, thus releasing a reader's cognitive resources to focus on meaning. Many students with learning disabilities (LD) struggle to develop reading fluency, which affects reading comprehension. This synthesis extends Chard, Vaughn, and Tyler's (2002) review, synthesizing fluency intervention research from 2001 to 2014. The search yielded 19 studies examining reading fluency and comprehension outcomes of reading fluency interventions for students with LD in kindergarten through 5th grade. Results showed repeated reading (RR), multicomponent interventions, and assisted

### This Article

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J Learn Disabil April 11, 2016 0022219416638028

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- ▶ Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders
- ▶ Journal of Learning Disabilities
- ▶ Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions
- ▶ Journal of Special Education



**Results showed repeated reading (RR), multicomponent interventions (e.g. Fluency Development Lesson), and assisted reading with audiobooks produced gains in reading fluency and comprehension.**

*Stevens, Walker, & Vaughn (2016)*  
*Journal of Learning Disabilities*

# WHY READING FLUENCY SHOULD BE HOT!

*Timothy V. Rasinski*

In 2009, an annual survey of experts (Cassidy & Cassidy, 2010) in reading determined that reading fluency was no longer a hot topic for reading. Moreover, those same experts determined that fluency should also not be considered a hot topic. The 2010 survey reports the same results (Cassidy, Ortlieb, & Shettel, 2011). How could this be?

The National Reading Panel's (NRP; 2000) survey of research in reading determined that reading fluency was, indeed, one of the pillars of effective reading instruction. Subsequent summaries of reading research have also determined that there is a solid body of research that supports reading fluency instruction (Chard, Vaughn, & Tyler, 2002; Kuhn & Stahl, 2003; Rasinski, 2010; Rasinski & Hoffman, 2003; Rasinski, Reutzel, Chard, & Linan-Thompson, 2011). In this article, I explore why fluency has become such a pariah in the reading field, and I also discuss why it should be a central element to any effective fluency curriculum and how this can happen.

## Why Fluency Is Not Hot

There are several reasons why fluency has lost its allure among reading educators and experts. The first problem lies in the way that fluency is generally measured. Reading rate (the number of words a reader can read on grade level text in a minute) has come to be the quintessential measure of reading fluency. This comes from studies that have shown high correlations between reading rate and reading comprehension. This correlational research has evolved into a definition of reading fluency as reading fast. As a result, reading fluency instruction has become in many classrooms a quest for speed. Students are provided with instruction that emphasizes increasing reading rate.

If fluency is nothing more than reading fast, then fluency instruction should be considered cold. In its

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**Timothy V. Rasinski** is a professor of literacy education at Kent State University, Ohio, USA; e-mail [trasinski@kent.edu](mailto:trasinski@kent.edu).

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# What does it mean to Succeed?

To laugh often and much. To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children. To earn the appreciation of honest critics and to endure the betrayal of false friends. To appreciate beauty. To find the best in others. To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition.

# What does it mean to Succeed?

To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived—this is to have succeeded.

*Attributed to R. W. Emerson*

# What does it mean to Succeed?

To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived—this is to have succeeded.

*Attributed to R. W. Emerson*

**And this is to have been a teacher.**

*Laura Rasinski*

# Timothy Rasinski, Ph.D.

[trasinsk@kent.edu](mailto:trasinsk@kent.edu)

For more on reading fluency see:

Rasinski, T. (2010). *The Fluent Reader* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). New York: Scholastic.

